

CLAIMS

1. A device for protection against adverse weather conditions comprising; a framework comprising a main support strut (41) and a plurality of additional support struts (S1, S2, S3...) wherein the additional support struts (S1, S2, S3...) can be fanned out from a storable configuration where they are substantially in alignment with one another to an erect configuration where each additional strut (S1, S2, S3...) extends radially at a different rotational position to encircle a centre point about which all the struts (S1, S2, S3...) are pivotable, a sheet of weather resistant material (16) mounted on the frame, the sheet of weather resistant material (16) forming, when the frame is in its erect configuration, a protective cover which can be positioned over a user to protect against adverse weather conditions, wherein, when erect, the frame is supported by a handle (42) which extends from a support strut (41) at a position which is spaced apart from the centre of the erected frame, characterised in that the main support strut (41) and the plurality of additional support struts (S1, S2, S3...) are connected by a series of flexible links in the form of live hinges.
2. A device as claimed in claim 1 wherein the handle (42) extends from a position which is at or adjacent to an outer edge of the protective cover.
3. A device as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the circle formed by the live hinges when the frame is erect is capped.
4. A device as claimed in claim 3 wherein the domed cap (82) includes a plug (81) receivable in a socket (71) provided within the circle formed by the live hinges.

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5. A device as claimed in claim 4 wherein the frame and cap (82) comprise the same material.
6. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the frame comprises a plastics material.
7. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the plastics material is selected from polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or a polyethylene (PE), or a polypropylene (PP).
8. A device as claimed in any of claims 2 to 7 wherein the handle (42) is itself hinged and/or is hingedly connected to a strut.
9. A device as claimed in any of claims 2 to 8 wherein the handle (42) is connected to the main support strut (41).
10. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the handle (42) is at least in part, telescopically extendable and retractable.
11. A device as claimed in any of claims 2 to 10 wherein the additional support struts (S1, S2, S3...) fan out in a substantially horizontal plane.
12. A device as claimed in any of claims 2 to 11 wherein the additional support struts (S1, S2, S3...) are arranged to fan out at an angle to the horizontal so as to provide a substantially dome or cone shaped surface over which the sheet of weather resistant material (16) is stretched.
13. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the sheet of weather resistant material (16) includes a flap at either or both of its ends which meet when the device is fanned out to its fully erect configuration.

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14. A device as claimed in claim 13 wherein the flap or flaps are fixable onto the opposite end of the sheet so as to provide a leak proof join between the ends of the sheet when the device is in its fully erect configuration.
15. A device as claimed in claim 13 or claim 14 wherein the flaps are fixable by means selected from press studs, hook and eye or Velcro™.
16. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the sheet of weather resistant material (16) is water resistant.
17. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the sheet of weather resistant material (16) is substantially opaque.
18. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the sheet of weather resistant material (16) mounted on the frame comprises a continuous sheet.
19. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the framework is provided with one or more locking mechanisms for locking the erected framework into position.
20. A device as claimed in claim 19 wherein the one or more locking mechanisms comprises a catch (63) configured for securing the main support strut (41) to an additional support strut (S1, S2, S3...) when the support struts (S1, S2, S3...) have been fanned out.
21. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the framework is provided with one or more locking mechanisms for locking the handle portion in its desired position for holding the device.
22. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the device includes

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12

one or more locking mechanisms for locking the device in its storable configuration for ease of storage and transportation.

23. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the handle (42) is detachably connected to the frame.
24. A device as claimed in claim 23 wherein the handle (42) is provided at one end with a collet (62) which is receivable in a collar (43) provided on the frame and is resiliently biased, when inserted into the collar (43), to grip the collar (43) from the inside.
25. A device as claimed in claim 24 wherein the collet (62) has a ridged or flanged end which, when the handle (42) is pulled so as to remove the collet (62) from the collar without first radially contracting the collet (62), tends to resist removal of the handle (42).
26. A device as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the additional struts (S1, S2, S3...) include a terminal strut (S8) which meets with the main strut (41), the main (41) and terminal (S8) struts being provided respectively with an upper (41a) and a lower surface (S8a) shaped to engage with the opposed surface of the other strut, each of these struts having a protrusion (41b, S8b) extending from the end of the strut furthest removed from the common axis the protrusions each being provided with a ribbed surface (41c, S8c) and being configured to provide a convenient gripping means which may be used by a user erecting the frame to draw the main and terminal struts together with a one handed grip.

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